

Attorney's Docket No. K&A 23-0335
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APPLICATION

FOR UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

SPECIFICATION

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

BE IT KNOWN THAT I, **MICHAEL BURLESON**, a citizen of
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have invented a new and useful
DENTAL APPLIANCE STORAGE ASSEMBLY of which the
following is a specification:

DENTAL APPLIANCE STORAGE ASSEMBLY

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

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The present invention relates to dental appliance storage devices and more particularly pertains to a new dental appliance storage assembly for storing a toothbrush and dental floss in a sanitary manner.

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Description of the Prior Art

The use of storage devices is known in the prior art. U.S. Patent No. 1,155,343 describes a tubular toothbrush holder having a screw on bottom cap and a circumferential protrusion to facilitate hanging the holder from a wall bracket. Another type of storage device is U.S. Patent No. 4,214,657 discloses a multiple chamber toothbrush holder and sterilizer. U.S. Patent No. 5,630,505 discloses a ventilated toothbrush holder cover assembly for placement over a cup-type toothbrush holder. U.S. Patent No. 5,864,288 discloses a talking toothbrush holder that produces a sound for a pre-determined amount of time upon the removal of the toothbrush from the holder.

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While these devices fulfill their respective, particular objectives and requirements, the need remains for a multi-purpose

toothbrush holder that can provide audio entertainment as a guide to proper brushing length and stores a toothbrush and floss in a sanitary yet entertaining manner to promote use by children.

5 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention generally comprises a base, a floss dispenser, and a tubular storage assembly having a conical bottom surface for holding a toothbrush in a non-vertical orientation within
10 the tubular storage assembly.

There has thus been outlined, rather broadly, the more important features of the invention in order that the detailed description thereof that follows may be better understood, and in
15 order that the present contribution to the art may be better appreciated. There are additional features of the invention that will be described hereinafter and which will form the subject matter of the claims appended hereto.

20 The objects of the invention, along with the various features of novelty which characterize the invention, are pointed out with particularity in the claims annexed to and forming a part of this disclosure.

25 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will be better understood and objects other than those set forth above will become apparent when consideration is given to the following detailed description thereof. Such
30 description makes reference to the annexed drawings wherein:

Figure 1 is a partially exploded perspective view of a new dental appliance storage assembly according to the present invention.

5 Figure 2 is a front view of the tubular storage assembly present invention holding a toothbrush.

Figure 3 is a front partially exploded view of an alternate embodiment of the present invention.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

With reference now to the drawings, and in particular to Figures 1 through 3 thereof, a new dental appliance storage
15 assembly embodying the principles and concepts of the present invention and generally designated by the reference numeral 10 will be described.

As best illustrated in Figures 1 through 3, the dental
20 appliance storage assembly 10 generally comprises a base 12 and a tubular storage member 14. The tubular storage member 14 has a conical bottom surface 16 extending into an interior 18 of the tubular storage member 14 such that a toothbrush 2 is urged into a non-vertical orientation when the toothbrush 2 is positioned in the
25 interior 18. The non-vertical orientation promotes the positioning of the toothbrush such that a backing of the head portion rests against the upper interior wall of the tubular storage member with the bristles extending inwardly but not generally touching the interior of the tubular storage member.

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A floss dispensing assembly 20 is coupled to the base 12. The floss dispensing assembly 20 is preferably shaped to resemble a

human character 22 such as Spiderman or the like. As will become apparent characters associated with the use or production of line, rope, vine, or similar string-like items are particularly appropriate.

5 The character 22 has a torso portion 24 and an arm portion 26. The torso portion 24 forms a compartment 28 for holding a roll of floss 30. A floss conduit 32 extends from the compartment 28 to an opening 34 in the arm portion 26 such that the floss 30 is threadable through the conduit 32. Thus, the floss 30 appears to be produced from or grasped by the arm portion 26 of the character 22. Typically, the arm portion 26 includes a hand 36. The opening 34 can be positioned anywhere on the arm portion 26 but is most preferably positioned on a wrist area 38 or in the palm of the hand 36.

15 An audio device 40 is coupled to the base 12 for producing a sound during use. The sound assists in preventing boredom during tooth brushing and flossing. Further, the length of time spent brushing can be associated with the playing of songs to insure that brushing done over a sufficient period of time to maximize effectiveness. The audio device can be an am/fm radio and may further include means such as a CD player, tape player, or the like to play pre-recorded audio sounds. The audio device can be provided in the shape of a jukebox 56.

25 The tubular storage member 14 is removable from the base 12 to facilitate taking a toothbrush along during travel. Removability is preferably established using a bottom section 42 of the tubular storage member 14 that is threaded. The base 12 includes a

threaded portion 44 complimentary to threading of the tubular storage member 14.

The tubular storage member 14 includes a bottom portion 46 and a top portion 48. The top portion 48 is separable from the bottom portion 46. The top portion 48 has an open bottom 50 couplable to the bottom portion 46, a closed top 52, and a plurality of slits 54 positioned proximate the closed top 52 for providing ventilation into the tubular storage assembly 14 when the top portion 48 is coupled to the bottom portion 46.

The bottom portion 46 has an open top 58 couplable to the top portion 48, a closed bottom 60, and a plurality of slits 62 positioned proximate the closed bottom 60 for providing ventilation into the tubular storage assembly 14 when the top portion 48 is coupled to the bottom portion 46.

Except when mutually exclusive, the variously described elements of the invention are intended to be combined to form additional embodiments such as the embodiment shown in Figure 3 having an audio device and no floss dispenser.

With respect to the above description then, it is to be realized that the optimum dimensional relationships for the parts of the invention, to include variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation, assembly and use, are deemed readily apparent and obvious to one skilled in the art, and all equivalent relationships to those illustrated in the drawings and described in the specification are intended to be encompassed by the present invention.

Therefore, the foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.